

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~strikethrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (currently amended), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claim 3, AMEND claims 1, 2 and 4-14 and ADD new claims 15, 16 and 17 in accordance with the following:

1. (currently amended) A method of administering user rights of a software program ~~that can be increased in number~~ licensed under an agreement in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded, comprising:

managing user right information indicating the state in which the software program is used and the user rights;

when at least the predetermined event occurs, detecting the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, sending notice indicating the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, and acquiring information of an expandable range of user right to which the user rights can be expanded;

updating the managed user right information, based on the acquired expandable range of user right information; and

allowing the software program to be executed based on the updated managed user right information.

~~a step of a user right administrative apparatus of determining whether a predetermined event has occurred;~~

~~a step of said user right administrative apparatus of informing a licensee of the occurrence of said predetermined event;~~

~~a step of said licensee of acquiring expansion information that causes said user right administrative apparatus to revise user right information indicating a maximum number of users permitted to use said software program;~~

~~a step of said licensee of providing said expansion information to said user right administrative apparatus; and~~

~~a step of said user right administrative apparatus of revising, in response to a reception of said expansion information, said user right information stored therein.~~

2. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising wherein said predetermined event is that a number indicative of how many times said licensee is not allowed to activate said software program in a predetermined time period because no user right remains unused exceeds a predetermined number. decoding the expandable range information, wherein the managed user right information is updated based on the decoded expandable range information.

3. (cancelled)

4. (currently amended) The method as claimed in claim 1, further comprising wherein said step of revising said user right information further comprises: verifying the decoded expandable range information with predetermined verification information for verifying whether the decoded expandable range information is correct, wherein the managed user right information can be updated based on the verification.

~~a step of receiving an expansion code from said licensee;~~

~~a step of decoding said expansion code to reproduce said expansion information; and~~

~~a step of revising said user right information using said expansion information.~~

5. (currently amended) A method of administering a user right agreement of a software program in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded, comprising: The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein managing agreement information containing the expandable range of the user rights and the effective period of the expansion, available in the case of the occurrence of at least the predetermined event;

receiving a notice indicating the occurrence of at least a predetermined event;

when at least the predetermined event occurs, generating expandable range information that allows the user rights to be expanded based on the managed agreement information; and

expanding the user right of the software program in accordance with the generated expandable range information.

~~said user rights are identified by respective identifying information;~~

~~said user rights information indicates which one of said user rights is in an effective state;~~

~~said expansion information indicates which one of said user rights is to be turned from an ineffective state to an effective state; and~~

~~the user right that is in the ineffective state cannot activate said software program.~~

6. (currently amended) A method of administering user rights of a software program licensed under an agreement in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded, comprising:~~The method as claimed in claim 1,~~ wherein

managing user right registration information indicating a user right identifier identifying the user right of the software program and whether the user right identifier is registered;

when at least the predetermined event occurs, detecting the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, sending notice indicating the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, and determining whether the user right identifier is registered based on the managed user right registration information; and

allowing the software program to be executed based on the determination.

~~said user right administrative apparatus informs, instead of said licensee, an agreement administrative apparatus that issues said expansion information, of the occurrence of said predetermined event.~~

7. (currently amended) A method of administering user right agreement of a software program in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded, comprising:~~The method as claimed in claim 6, wherein said expansion information is provided by an agreement administrative apparatus instead of said licensee.~~

managing user right registration information indicating a user right identifier identifying the user right of the software program and whether the user right identifier is registered;

receiving a notice indicating the occurrence of at least a predetermined event;

when at least the predetermined event occurs, determining whether the user right identifier is registered in response to receipt of an inquiry, and returning the result of the determination; and

expanding the user rights of the software program based on the returned result of the determination.

8. (currently amended) An apparatus administering user rights of a software program licensed under an agreement in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded, comprising: ~~The method as claimed in~~

claim 6, wherein

a management unit to manage user right information indicating the state in which the software program is used and the user rights;

a detection unit to detect the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, and to send notice indicating the occurrence of at least the predetermined event;

an acquisition/update unit to acquire, when said detection unit detects that at least the predetermined event has occurred, expandable range information up to which the user right can be expanded and to update the user right information managed by the management unit based on the acquired expandable range information; and

a software execution unit to allow the software program to be executed based on the updated user right information managed by said management unit.

~~said agreement administrative apparatus retrieves, in response to a reception of the information of the occurrence of said predetermined event, agreement information indicating said maximum number corresponding to said software program and said licensee; and~~

~~said agreement administrative apparatus generates said expansion information.~~

9. (currently amended) An apparatus for administering user rights of a software program licensed under an agreement in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded, comprising:~~The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein~~

a management unit to manage user right registration information indicating a user right identifier identifying the user right of the software program and whether the user right identifier is registered;

a detection unit to detect the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, and to send notice indicating the occurrence of at least the predetermined event; and

a software execution unit to determine, when said detection unit detects that at least the predetermined event has occurred, whether the user right identifier is registered based on the user right registration information managed by said management unit, and to allow the software program to be executed based on the determination.

~~said agreement administrative apparatus retrieves, in response to a reception of the information of the occurrence of said predetermined event, agreement information indicating which one of said user rights is in an effective state; and~~

~~said agreement administrative apparatus generates said expansion information indicating which one of said user rights is to be turned from said ineffective state to said effective~~

state.

10. (currently amended) An apparatus for administering a user right agreement of a software program in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software can be expanded ~~An administrative system of user rights of a software program that can be increased in number~~, comprising:

a management unit to manage agreement information containing the expandable range of the user rights and the effective period of the expansion, available in the case of the occurrence of at least the predetermined event;

a reception unit to receive a notice indicating the occurrence of at least a predetermined event;

a generation unit to generate, when at least the predetermined event occurs, expandable range information that allows the user rights to be expanded based on the agreement information managed by said management unit; and

an expansion to expand the user right of the software program in accordance with the generated expandable range information.

~~a communications unit;~~

~~a secondary storage unit; and~~

~~a central processing unit that determines whether a predetermined event has occurred, informs a licensee of the occurrence of said predetermined event, and revises, in response to a reception of an expansion information, user right information stored therein;~~

~~wherein~~

~~said licensee acquires said expansion information that causes said user right administrative apparatus to revise said user right information indicating a maximum number of users permitted to use said software program; and~~

~~said licensee provides said expansion information to said user right administrative apparatus.~~

11. (currently amended) An apparatus for administering user right agreement of a software program in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded, comprising: ~~The administrative system as claimed in claim 10, wherein~~

a management unit to manage user right registration information indicating a user right identifier to identify the user right of the software program and whether the user right identifier is

registered;

a reception unit to receive a notice indicating the occurrence of at least a predetermined event;

a determination unit to determine, when at least the predetermined event occurs, whether the user right identifier is registered in response to receipt of an inquiry, and to return the result of the determination; and

an expansion unit to expand the user rights of the software program based on the result of the determination returned by said determination unit.

~~said user rights are identified by respective identifying information;~~

~~said user right information indicates which one of said user rights is in an effective state;~~

~~said expansion information indicates which one of said user rights is to be turned from an ineffective state to said effective state; and~~

~~the user right that is in the ineffective state cannot activate said software program.~~

12. (currently amended) A computer readable recording medium storing a computer program that causes a computer to administer user rights of a software program licensed under an agreement in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded~~An administrative system of agreement information of a software program in which user rights can be increased in number, the computer program comprising:~~

instructions to manage user right information indicating the state in which the software program is used and the user rights;

instructions to detect, when at least the predetermined has occurred, the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, to send notice indicating the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, to acquire expandable range information up to which the user rights can be expanded;

instructions to update the managed user right information based on the acquired expandable range of information; and

instructions to allow the software program to be executed based on the updated user right information.

~~a communications unit;~~

~~an secondary storage unit; and~~

~~a central processing unit that retrieves, in response to a reception of information of an occurrence of a predetermined event, agreement information indicating a maximum number corresponding to said software program and a licensee, and generates an expansion~~

~~information that causes an administrative apparatus of user rights.~~

13. (currently amended) A computer readable recording medium storing a computer program that ~~causes a computer to administer~~administers user rights of a software program licensed under an agreement in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded ~~that can be increased in number, wherein said computer program causes a computer to,~~ the computer program comprising:

instructions to manage user right registration information indicating a user right identifier identifying the user right of the software program and whether the user right identifier is registered;

instructions to detect, when at least the predetermined event has occurred, the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, to send notice indicating the occurrence of at least the predetermined event, and to determine whether the user right identifier is registered based on the managed user right registration information; and

instruction to allow the software program to be executed based on the determination
~~determine whether a predetermined event has occurred;~~
~~inform a licensee of an occurrence of a predetermined event; and~~
~~revise, in response to a reception of expansion information, user right information stored therein;~~

wherein

~~said licensee acquires said expansion information that causes to revise said user right information indicating a maximum number of users permitted to use said software program; and~~
~~said licensee provides said expansion information to said computer.~~

14. (currently amended) ~~The~~A computer readable recording medium as ~~claimed in claim 13, wherein~~ storing a computer program that causes a computer to administer a user right agreement of a software program in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded, the computer program comprising:

instructions to manage agreement information containing the expandable range of the user rights and the effective period of the expansion, available in the case of the occurrence of at least the predetermined event;

instructions to receive a notice indicating the occurrence of at least a predetermined event;

instructions to generate, when at least the predetermined event occurs, expandable

range information that allows the user rights to be expanded based on the managed agreement information; and

instructions to expand the user right of the software program in accordance with the generated expandable range information.

~~said user rights are identified by respective identifying information;
said user rights information indicates which one of said user rights is in an effective state;
said expansion information indicates which one of said user rights is to be turned from an ineffective state to an effective state; and
the user right that is in the ineffective state cannot activate said software program.~~

15. (new) A computer readable recording medium storing a computer program that causes a computer to administer a user right agreement of a software program in which, if at least a predetermined event occurs, the user rights of the software program can be expanded, the computer program comprising:

instructions to manage user right registration information indicating a user right identifier identifying the user right of the software program and whether the user right identifier is registered;

instructions to receive a notice indicating the occurrence of at least a predetermined event;

instructions to determine, when at least the predetermined event occurs, whether the user right identifier is registered in response to receipt of an inquire, and to return the results of the determination; and

instructions to expand the user rights of the software program based on the returned result of the determination.

16. (new) A computer readable recording medium storing a computer program that causes a computer to administer a user right agreement of a software program by:

managing user right registration information indicating a user right identifier identifying the user right of the software program and whether the user right identifier is registered;

receiving a notice indicating the occurrence of at least a predetermined event;

determining, when at least the predetermined event occurs, whether the user right identifier is registered in response to receipt of an inquire, and returning the results of the determination; and

expanding the user rights of the software program based on the returned result of the

determination.

17 (new) A method of administering a user right agreement of a software program, comprising:

managing user right registration information indicating a user right identifier identifying the user right of the software program and whether the user right identifier is registered;

receiving a notice indicating the occurrence of at least a predetermined event;

determining, when at least the predetermined event occurs, whether the user right identifier is registered in response to receipt of an inquire, and returning the results of the determination; and

expanding the user rights of the software program based on the returned result of the determination.